NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

# GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

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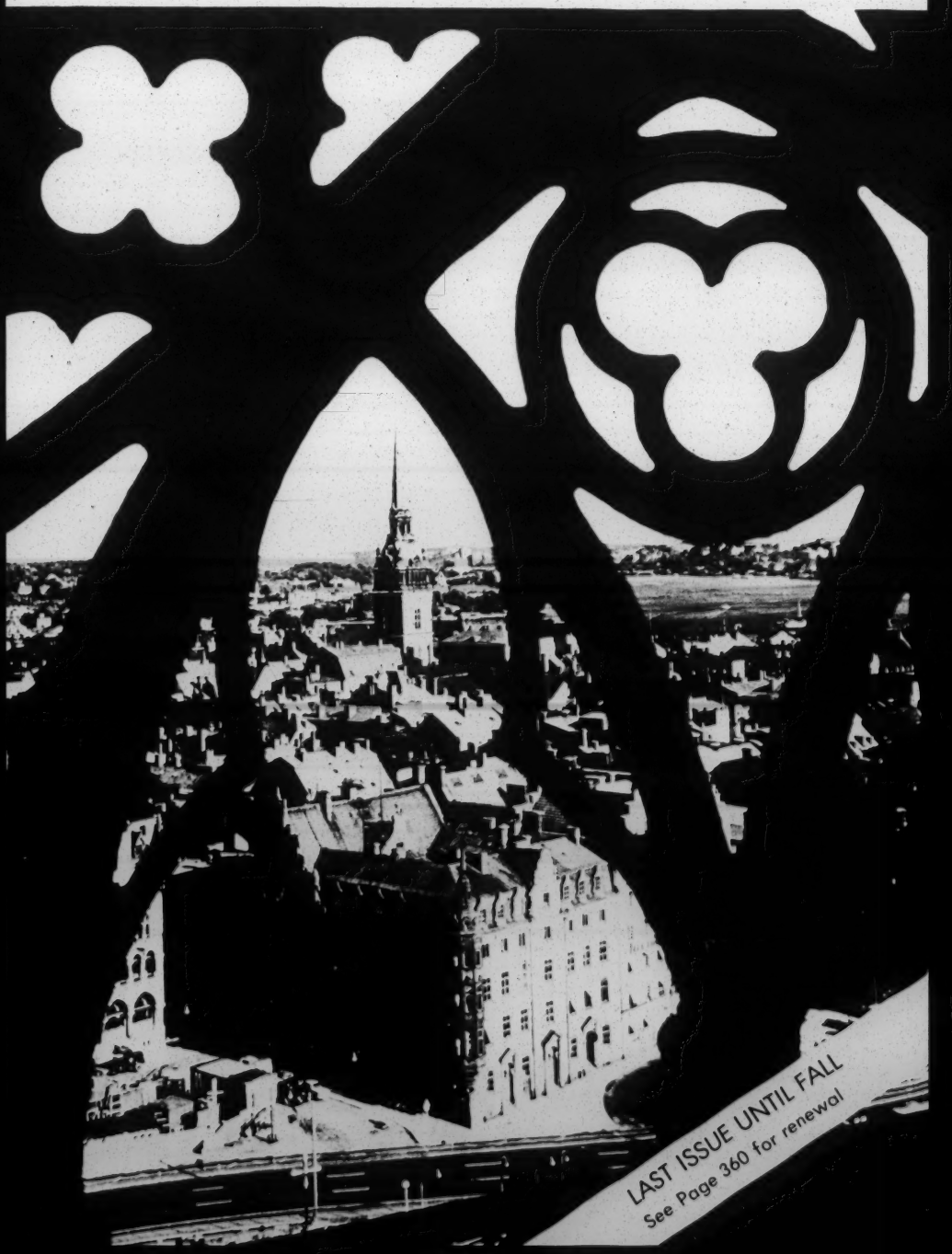


LAST ISSUE UNTIL FALL
See Page 360 for renewal

UMI

**Swedish gentry**—In a country of modern comforts, gracious living has a traditional setting in the manor house region of Södermanland.

Below, ships at Göteborg carry on the trade that helps keep Sweden rich.

*IN THIS ISSUE* —
► Sweden ► River Playground
► Nutria ► Index, Issues 1-30

compulsory health insurance, payments to mothers for children under 16, housing subsidies, nearly-free annual vacations for children, and school lunches.

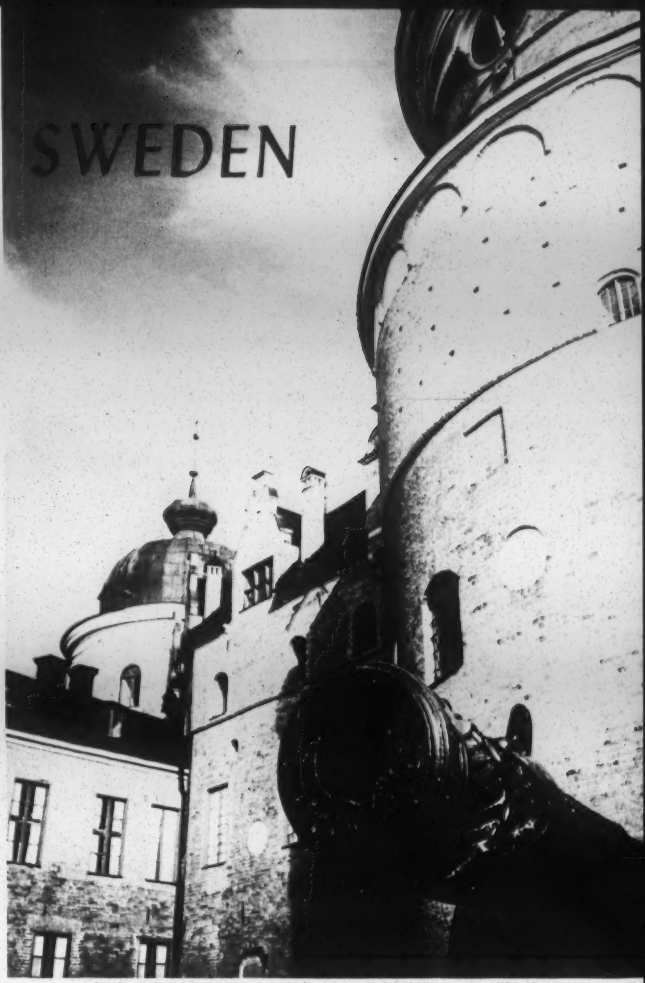
Swedes call their land "the long country." Sharing the Scandinavian Peninsula with Norway, it reaches almost 1,000 miles from the Baltic Sea to above the Arctic Circle. The largest Scandinavian country, Sweden could hold the six New England states plus New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The Gulf of Bothnia on the east, an arm of the North Sea on the west, and the Baltic on the south tempt many Swedes, like their Viking ancestors, to go to sea to seek their fortunes. They trade what they have—the fruit of their forests, factories, and mines—for what they lack—some food and raw materials.

Göteborg, Sweden's largest port (below), hums with the daily bustle of fishing craft, freighters, and shipyards.

UMI

# SWEDEN



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW H. BROWN AND THOMAS NEBBIA (COVER), NGS STAFF

SWEDEN has won fame as one of the most modern and progressive countries in the world. Yet relics of its past remind us that it is one of the oldest. Man has lived on its rocky mountainsides and fertile plains for some 12,000 years.

Crude stone mausoleums built 4,000 years ago still crown Swedish hills. Artists of the Middle Ages carved Viking boats and told of their voyages on some 2,000 rune-stones still scattered about the countryside. Oriental and Roman coins found in Swedish soil tell the extent of Viking travels.

Gripsholm Castle at right, more than 400 years old, rises from a small island in Lake Mälaren, 3½ hours by steamer from Stockholm. Its red brick towers overlooking the blue-green lake recall 16th-century splendor. From correspondence between the castle's owner, King Gustav Vasa, and his steward, we learn a little of life in the mansion. The king's sons and daughters once dropped in for a visit of a few weeks. With their retinues they totaled 340 people, and the king's well-stocked larders lost to their healthy appetites 12,700 eggs, 229 barrels of bread, and eight barrels of butter, among other tidbits. On a similar occasion a steward grumbled that 240 steers were not enough to feed the king's guests.

But if royalty feasted, Swedes saw to it that commoners did well, too. Sweden has long cherished freedom for all men. Even the Vikings, who sailed far to raid and trade, coupled with their violence a sense of fair play and belief in the equality of men. While the rest of Europe still struggled under the feudal system, Swedish farmers were represented in the *Riksdag*—the national parliament then and now—which met as early as 1435.

Today Sweden's program of social welfare is one of the most advanced in the world. The country calls its system "the middle way," combining private, cooperative, and government enterprise to finance such benefits as old-age pensions,



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where the Baltic meets Lake Mälaren. The view of the city on the cover looks through a church grill toward City Hall and St. Gertrud German Church.

Most of Sweden is too rocky, sandy, or swampy for farming. The fertile 8 percent is mostly in the south. But sturdy Swedish farmers, using modern methods, are able to feed most of their countrymen.

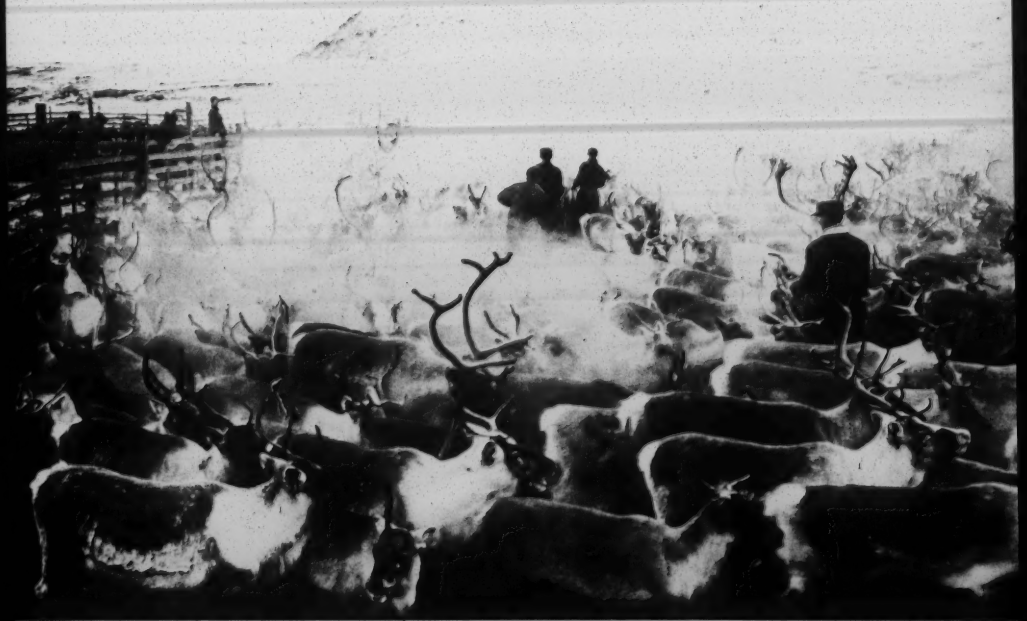
Rivers of the north provide abundant power to turn factory wheels.

Forests cover half the nation. Spring sees Swedish rivers loaded with logs on their way downstream to sawmills, and to furniture, match, and paper factories. Swedish wood pulp travels to California to be turned into tissue for wrapping oranges. In Japan it is made into colored lanterns. Argentina converts it to imitation leather. In Pennsylvania it becomes plastic fishing lines. England uses it in newsprint. Italy turns it into rayon stockings.

Swedes also turn out steel, chemicals, textiles, automobiles, porcelain, and machinery. L.B.

**The North Country**—Miner above prepares to blast out ore in Kiruna iron mine, above the Arctic Circle. Today power plants, mines, sawmills, and railroads bustle in Norrland, once inhabited only by Lapp reindeer herders (below).

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER THOMAS NEBBIA



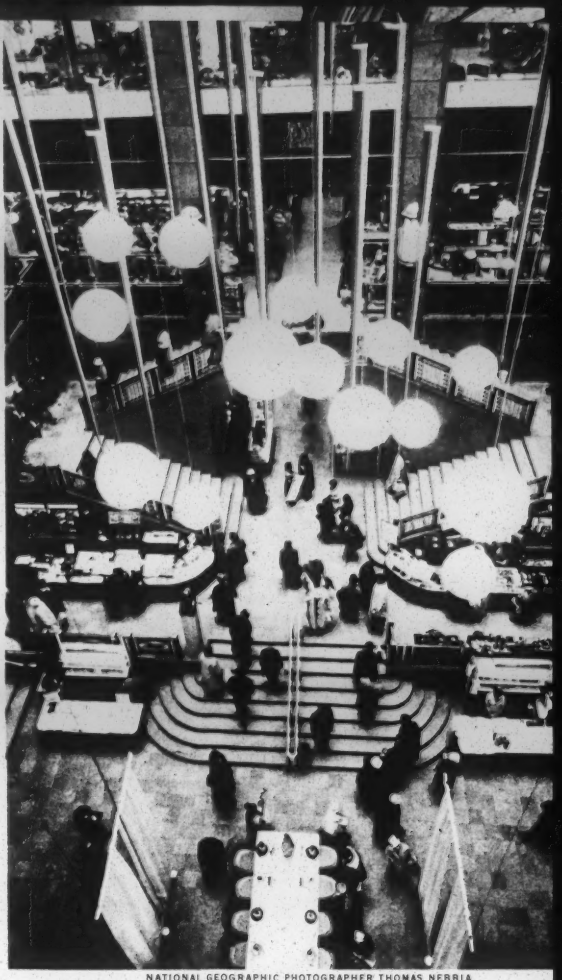


UMI

Although the country lies at about the same latitude as Alaska, the Gulf Stream acts as a hot-water bottle, taking the chill off the weather and luring fish to its shores: salmon, cod, herring, mackerel.

Sweden's south is low, with rolling plains. Wheat, barley, rye, oats, potatoes, and sugar beets ripen in the fields. Cattle graze green meadows. Red or whitewashed farmhouses with neat thatched roofs nestle among the low hills.

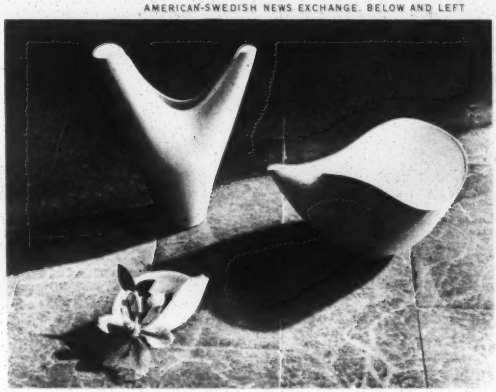
Central Sweden is a hilly plateau sloping east from the mountains of the Norwegian border. Farmland gives way to forests of beech, pine, and birch, shimmering lakes, iron mines, and industrial cities.



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER THOMAS NEBBIA

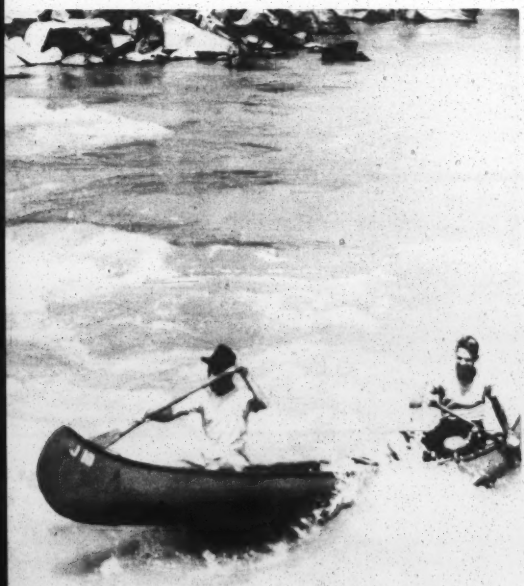
**Stockholm shopping:** In the NK department store Swedes select goods from a cosmopolitan range that includes such Swedish items as modern furniture, Orrefors glass (left), and ceramics (below). Swedish arts and crafts have earned acclaim around the world.

AMERICAN-SWEDISH NEWS EXCHANGE, BELOW AND LEFT



North lies mountainous Norrland, its lower section threaded with racing rivers, its northern area a region of rocky, barren moors where nomadic reindeer herders hunt scarce pasture. Sawmills and iron mines dot the area.

Lakes cover about 8 percent of the country. Stockholm, the capital, as well as a commercial, cultural, and industrial center, spreads across a chain of islands



DAVID S. BOYER (BELOW) AND WALTER M. EDWARDS, NGS STAFF

**Men risk** Potomac rapids (above) and girls laze on a Mississippi houseboat (below), but the waters go their own way, winding somewhere safe to sea. How rivers and men interact has been examined in this series.

Now "white water" canoeists face the rapids for sport. Not recommended for the inexperienced, waters like the Potomac Gorge (left) offer exhilarating (and not always dry) rides for experts. Emulators of the pioneers today also paddle off to camp along riverbanks.

For the less muscular, motorboats are multiplying rapidly. The flotilla below is on the Mississippi near Alton, Illinois. The houseboat in the foreground offers all the comfort of a house trailer—and a smoother ride.

There has been a tremendous increase in boating in recent years. Particularly popular are the small outboard runabouts that can be carried on a trailer to any water desired. With more leisure time and more money, Americans crowd to the waterways in such numbers that some places already have floating traffic jams.

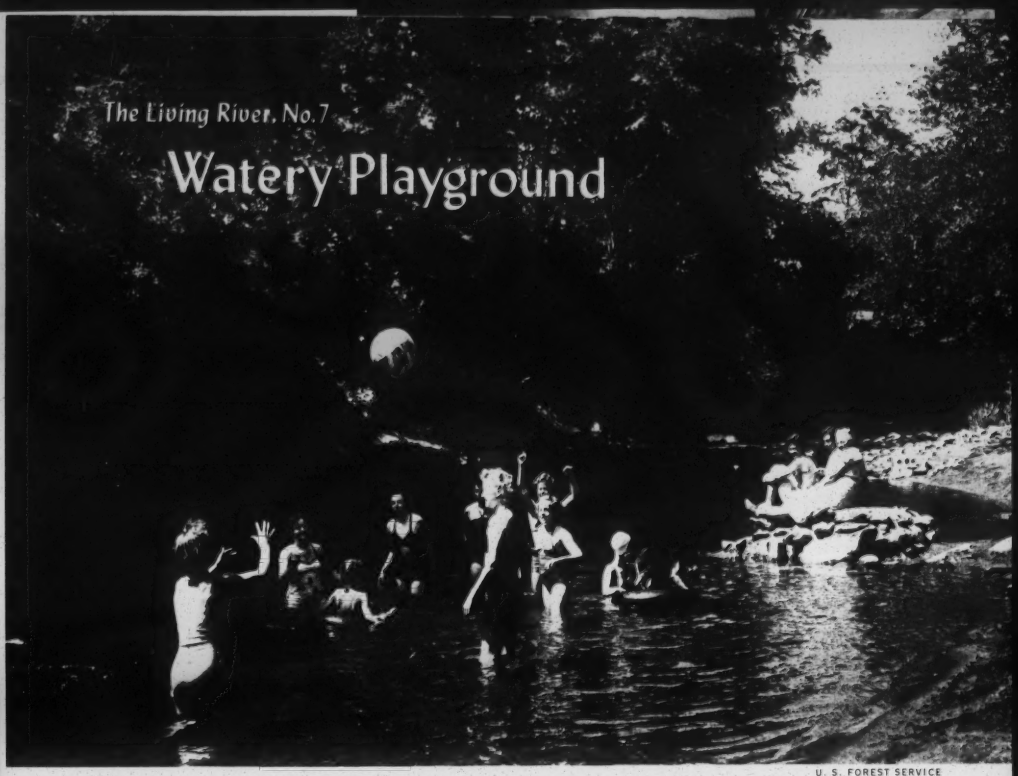
Soon, it seems, rivers will have as many people in them as fish. Aqua-Lungs free swimmers from the limitations of their own lungs; water skis free them from the law of gravity—sometimes.

Human demands for watery fun increase every year. If they are to be met, man must look to the health of the living river. F.S.

UMI

*The Living River, No. 7*

# Watery Playground



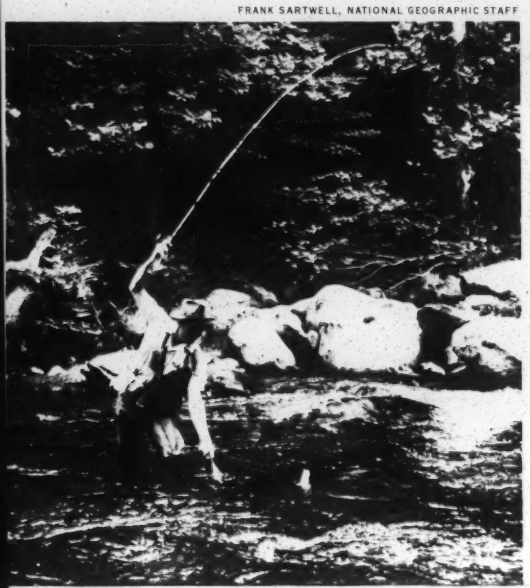
U. S. FOREST SERVICE

THE RIVER is generous, powerful, life-giving, and in danger of death, as we have seen in this series. It is also a lot of fun.

As vacation time approaches, more Americans than ever before are planning to enjoy some familiar stream—either its comfort or its sport. The ladies above play in the currents of Oregon's Applegate River. Some benefit from its coolness without bothering to get wet.

America's most popular participant sport is fishing. It has been said that the necessities of the past are the sports of the present. The motives of the angler below are about as different as they can be from those of the hungry pioneers who fished this stream.

FRANK SARTWELL, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF



He is netting a 10-inch trout on the West Fork of the Little Pigeon River in the Tennessee section of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This stream has been set aside for "fishing for fun." There is no closed season; a man may fish anytime he desires. There is no limit; he may catch as many trout as he can bamboozle into taking his fly. But he must put them all back into the river unharmed. This plan offers all the fun of fishing without depleting the fish—and no one has to clean his catch.

Another fun-filled activity that stems from old-time hard work is canoeing. Once Indian craft offered the best way to explore a new continent.

iments got out of hand when nutrias outwitted their captors and escaped.

Where the fugitives found a sweep of marshland like that along Louisiana's coast (above), they found a habitat to their liking. Today hordes of them paddle with their webbed hind feet along the bayous, feeding on cattails, reeds, swamp grass—or farm crops.

Six pairs were introduced into Louisiana in 1939. Now they number in the millions, the largest concentration in the country. This biological explosion has been generated by the nutria's rapid breeding. A female can produce five litters in two years.

The sudden influx has Fish and Wildlife experts worried. The newcomer competes with muskrats for food, scares away migrating waterfowl, and makes life miserable for marshland farmers. Predators and disease, two factors which often help nature maintain its delicate balance, have not taken their customary toll.

Trappers who roam the marsh in wooden pirogues do their best to hold down the population. Last year Louisiana trappers brought 460,000 pelts to market—all but 3,000 of the United States total. Nutria trails muskrat and surpasses mink in dollar value in the nation's foremost fur-producing State. The trapper above carries a day's catch to the cabin to skin and dry.

But the demand for the dark-amber pelt is not unlimited, even if its supply seems to be. Enthusiasts foresaw the nutria as the "poor girl's mink." But economics so far have been against it. So much hand labor is required to sew pelts together that 90 percent of all skins trapped in this country are shipped to Europe for processing. The skins return as an expensive coat. The high cost cuts demand, bringing down the market price of pelts and discouraging intensive trapping.

For the farmer, the nutria spells nothing but trouble. If the animal isn't feasting on his rice, sweet potatoes, or corn, he's digging holes in the levees. This allows water to drain out of flooded rice fields, and flow into dry potato patches.

But if the nutria can be appalling in the plural, it is appealing in the singular. At right Nora Lynch holds a several-weeks-old kitten. Nora's pride will grow into a lovable pet, easily handled, quiet, clean—and completely unaware of the bad reputation earned by its fast-multiplying kinfolk. A.P.M.

UMI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER ROBERT F. SISSON

# NUTRIA – Innocent Villain

THIS BUCK-TOOTHED, furry swamp dweller can teach an important lesson in biology and the balance of nature.

Meet the nutria, innocent villain. The perpetrator of the plot is man, who uprooted the animal from its natural home and transported it to another continent.

Even before man's interference, the nutria was a bundle of contradictions. His name is Spanish for otter (which Spanish explorers mistook him to be), but he is actually a rodent. He has a head like a beaver, ears like a mouse, and a body the size of a dachshund. He makes a noise like a pig.

Half a century ago the nutria *(Myocastor coypus)* had been almost exterminated from its native haunts in southern South America to meet the demand for its fur in European salons. Several promoters, to save the species and turn a profit, imported the nutria into the United States where they started fur farms. The exper-

Ireland; Netherlands; Portugal; Sweden
**Fairs** Calgary Stampede 88-89
**Festivals** Germany 36; Japan 139; Malaya 28; Quebec Winter Carnival 174; Timber Carnival 178-180
**Fish and fishing** Alberta 89; California 98; codfish 158; crabs, larval 256; electric eel 175; Fish Pier, Boston 155; Formosa 304-305; Greece 172; Japan 137; Mexico 215; Portugal 110-111; Portuguese men-of-war 256; trawlermen 265-269; trout 191; tuna 291; Wisconsin 197 *See also* Algae; Photosynthesis
**Food** bratwurst 194; breadfruit 198-199; cheese 44-45, 195; China 5; Chlorella, source 284-285; France 41; Greece 172; pear cactus 31; tomatoes 308-309 *See also* Agriculture
**Formosa** 301-305
**Fort Sumter** 298-300
**Fossils** dinosaurs 82-83; earliest man 94-96
**France** 37-43
**Frost** 240
**Gas** Alberta 86, 89; Algeria 46, 48
**Geology** geysers 246-247; glaciers 159 *See also* Fossils; Mountains; Volcanoes
**Germany** Black Forest 34-36; farms 140-141; Ruhr 260-261
**Geysers** 246-247
**Ghana** 128-132
**Gravity** 32-33
**Great Lakes** ice 118-119
**Greece** 169-173
**Guatemala** 92-93
**Gulls** 238-239
**Harbors and ports** Bombay 68-69; Boston 154-156; Brownsville 245; Calcutta 63; Cape Town 122; Chicago 226-228; *Europoort* 17; Honfleur 41; Kavalla 172; Léopoldville 12; Longyearbyen 163; Malaya 27, 29; New Orleans 223; Plymouth, England 152; Rotterdam 18-19; Salonika 170; Singapore 229-233; Sydney 281
**Henry, Prince, the Navigator** 114-115
**Highways** Amazon 188-189; Pan American 274-276
**Hinduism** 66-67
**History, American** Boston 154-156; C & O Canal 296-297; Civil War 142-144, 298-300; Kansas 314-316; Life in 1860 262-264; Rhode Island 290-291; Santa Fe Trail 318-319; Texas 242-244; White House 145-149; Wisconsin 194-195
**History, World** Australia 278-279; Britain 248-249; France 39-43; Greece 170, 171, 173; Holy Land 338-341; Iran 183-184; Ireland 327-328; Liberia 270-271; South Africa 122-125 *See also* Christianity; Henry, Prince
**Hummingbirds** 78-79
**Ice canoes** 174
**Iceland** geysers 247
**Illinois** Chicago 226-228
**India** 61-72
**Indians** Chocó 276; Guatemala 92-93; Hopi dancer 320; Maya 208-216; Pueblo 225, 321; Toltecs 206-213
**Indonesia** Komodo dragon 13; 20-21
**Indus River** 70-72
**Industries** algae use 284; cheese 44-45; Europe 14-17; Ruhr 260-261; tweed making 328-329; Venezuela 258-259
**Inland waterways** France 40; St. Lawrence Seaway 118-119
**Insects** Africa 250-252; beetles 30-31; wasp birth 252
**Iran** 181-185
**Ireland** 325-329
**Irrigation** Algeria 47-48; Angola 221; Australia 281; California-Arizona 336; Columbia River basin 166-168; India-Pakistan 70-72; Iran 184-185; Israel 340
**Islam** 186-187
**Islands** Aran Islands 329; Spitsbergen 161-163; Tahiti 198-199 *See also* Japan; Tasmania
**Israel** 337-341
**Japan** 133-139
**Judaism** 342-343
**Kansas** 313-317; Santa Fe Trail 318-319
**Komodo dragon** 13, 20-21
**Lakes** Franklin Delano Roosevelt 166; Great Lakes 118-119; Image Lake 312; Lake Atitlán 92; Lake Mendota 197; Wolfgangsee 106
**Languages** Africa 164-165
**Laos** 202-204
**Latin America** *See* Brazil; El Salvador; Guatemala; Mexico; Panama; Venezuela
**Liberia** 270-271
**Lumber and lumbering** California 98; log jam 294; Timber Carnival 178-180; United States 58-60; Wisconsin 195-196
**Machinery** aluminum plant 168; cable cars 162, 163; drills 244, 330, 331; ore loading 259; road machinery 189; sewing machine 263; textile mill 304; turbine main shaft 196; wheat harvesting 315
**Malaya** 25-29
**Maps** Africa 123; Alberta 87; Angola 219; Brazil 188; Columbia River Basin, U. S.-Canada 166; Congo River 11; England-Wales, Offa's Dyke 248; Ethiopia 51; Europa 15; Formosa 303; India 71; Indus River 71; Ireland 327; Japan 134; Laos 203; Malaya 27; Mediterranean area, eastern 171; Moslem World 187; Panama 274; United States 134, Santa Fe Trail 318, tornado area 347; United States-Canada, coastal fishing area 269; Utah-Colorado 83; Yucatán 213
**Markets** France, Paris 38, 39; Guatemala, Sololá 93; India, Hardwar 63
**Massachusetts** *See* Boston
**Mediterranean Sea** shipwreck 49, 54-55
**Mexico** sacred cave 206-211; Yucatán 205-216
**Mines and minerals** Alberta, sulphur 86; Algeria 48; Angola 220; Austria, salt 106-108; coal 162; Ghana 129; Israel 341; Malaya, tin 26,27; Ruhr 260-261; South Africa 125; Venezuela, iron 258- 259; zinc slabs 177
**Mohole project** 330-331
**Money** beaver pelts 91; Bronze Age 54, 55; cheese 44
**Mont St. Michel** 42-43
**Moslem religion** *See* Islam
**Mountains** Cascades 310-312; Djurjura Mountains 47; Mount Damavand 182; Rockies 85; Schafberg 106
**NASA** (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) 73-77



UMI

**Africa** earliest man 94-96; insects 250-252; languages 164-165; Pygmies 102-103 *See also* Algeria; Angola; Congo River; Ethiopia; Ghana; Liberia; Union of South Africa; Victoria Falls
**Agriculture** Alberta 87, 88, 89; Algeria 46-48; Angola 219, 220; California 99-101, 309; climate changes 158-160; coffee 282-283; corn 224-225; Ethiopia 51-52; Formosa 301, 303, 304; France 40; Germany 140-141; Ghana 128-129; Greece 171, 173; India 63-64; Iran 183-185; Ireland 328-329; Israel 339-341; Japan 134, 136, 137; Kansas 313-317; Laos 202-204; Malaya 26, 28; Mexico 215, 216; Pakistan 72; Portugal 112-113; rice 301, 304; rubber 271; sisal 216; South Africa 123; sugar cane 303; Tasmania 176, 177; Texas 243, 245; tomatoes 308-309; tree farming 58-60; Wisconsin 195
**Alberta** 85-89
**Algae** 284-285
**Algeria** 46-48
**Angola** 217-221
**Animals** bear, polar 160; beaver 90-91; buffalo 104, 203; cattle 88, 123, 242-243, 316; copepod 255, 256; coral 253; dolphin 160; goat 45, 310; horses 88, 310, 325; Komodo dragon 13, 20-21; lion 50; moose 160; mules 296; nutria 356-357; oxen 52, 109; pig 328; prairie dog 105; river dwellers 190-191; sheep 47, 96, 279, 328
**Archeology** earliest man 94-96; Mexico 205-213; Stonehenge 322-324; underwater 49, 54-55
**Architecture** campanile 316, 317; China 2, 4, 5; colonial 290, 293; Ethiopia 50; Ghana 128; India 62, 65; Kansas State Capitol 317; Malaya 29; Netherlands 19; South Africa 125; Texas 241, 243 *See also* Castles; Dwellings
**Arctic regions** Spitsbergen 161-163
**Arizona** beetles 30-31
**Asia** *See* China; Formosa; India; Indonesia; Iran; Israel; Japan; Laos; Malaya; Pakistan; Singapore
**Astronomy** stars 234-235
**Atomic energy** Euratom 16
**Australia** 278-281; Tasmania 176-177
**Austria** Salzkammergut 106-108
**Aviation** B-57 347; F-84 302; tornado hunting 346-347
**Beavers** 90-91
**Birds** bald eagle 332-333; ducks 190; fish hawk 191; gulls 238-239; hummingbirds 78-79; swans 8-9
**Black Forest** 34-36
**Boats and ships** barges 18, 40, 261, 295, 296, 297; *Bounty* 198-199; Bronze Age ship 54; canoe 192; Chicago 228; *Constitution* (frigate) 155-156; *Cuss I* 331; dugout 294; *Explorer* 116; fishing boat 109-111; *Flying Cloud* 263; freighter 163, 196; hookers 329; ice canoe 174; iceboats 197; icebreaker 118-119; *Liberté* 152; New Orleans harbor 264; *Ouise* 221; Panama Canal 272-273; racing shell 278; rafts 29; *Sagres* 115; shipyard 108, 113; Thames 8; trawler 265-269; *Triton* 192; tug 10; yachts 289
**Bombay** 68-69
**Boston** 154-156; trawlermen 265-269
**Brazil** highway 188-189
**Breadfruit** 198-199
**British Commonwealth** *See* Australia; Canada; England; Ghana; India; Malaya; New Zealand; Northern Ireland; Pakistan; Singapore; Union of South Africa; Wales
**Buddhism** 200-201
**C & O Canal** 296-297
**California** 97-101
**Canada** Great Lakes 118-119; ice canoes 174; Niagara Falls 6-7 *See also* Alberta; Columbia River
**Canals** C & O 296-297; Panama 272-273
**Cascades** Wilderness 310-312
**Castles** Chirk Castle 249; France 38, 40
**Caves** sacred cave, Mexico 206-211
**Central America** *See* El Salvador; Guatemala; Panama; Panama Canal
**Cheese** 44-45
**Chicago** 226-228
**Children** Algerian 46; American 56; Chinese 1; Chocó Indian 276; European 13, 15; German 35; Ghanaian 129, 132; Iranian 183; Israeli 337, 340; Jewish 342
**China** emigrants 233; Peking 1-5 *See also* Formosa
**Chlorella** 284-285
**Christianity** 286-288
**Civil War** Centennial 142-144; Fort Sumter 298-300
**Clothing** Austria 106-108; Chinese actress 305; Ethiopia 53; Germany 35, 36; Ghana 129; Greece 171; Laos 204; Maori 247; Maya 214
**Columbia River** 166-168
**Communism** China 1-5
**Confucianism** 307
**Congo River** 10-12
**Conservation** beaver dams 90-91; erosion 222-223; fish 269; prairies 104-105; rivers 344-345; woodlands 58-60
**Corn** 224-225
**Crafts** carving 36; clock making 35; embroidery 135; lantern making 134; Panama hats 216; rugmaking 64, 183; straw "painting" 229
**Dams** 334-336; beaver dams 90, 91; Grand Coulee 166; Imperial Dam 336; India-Pakistan 71-72; Kariba Dam 334, 335
**Dances** African 124; Hopi 320; India 61; Japan 137; Malaya 28; Polish 193, 194
**Deserts** Moçâmedes 219; Negev 339-341; Sahara 46-48
**Dinosaurs** (Dinosaur National Monument) 82-83
**Dwellings** Angola 221; Austria 107; California 100; Congo 12; Ethiopia 52; Ireland 327; Laos 202; Malaya 29; Maya 214; Panama 275, 276; White House 145-149
**Eagles** bald eagle 332-333
**Earth** crust drilling 330-331; globe 348
**Education** China 1, 4, 5; European School 15; Ghana 129; Israel 341; Malaya 29; United States, Boston 156, Kansas 317
**El Salvador** 282-283
**Electric eel** 175
**England** Offa's Dyke 248-249; Stonehenge 322-324; swans 8-9
**English Channel** 152-153
**Ethiopia** 50-53
**Europe** Europa 14-17 *See also* Austria; England; France; Germany; Greece;

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**National Forests** Cascades 310-312
**National Monuments** C & O Canal 296-297; Dinosaur National Monument 83-84; Fort Sumter 298-300
**National Parks** Canada, Banff 85, 86; United States, Yellowstone 246, 247
**Netherlands** *Europoort* 17; Rotterdam 18, 19
**New Mexico** Santa Fe Trail 318-319
**New York** Niagara Falls 6-7
**New Zealand** geysers 247
**Newport**, Rhode Island 290-293
**Niagara Falls** 6-7
**Northern Ireland** 326, 327
**Norway** *See* Spitsbergen
**Nutria** 356-357
**Oceans** bottle oceanography 116-117; tidal bore 33
**Offa's Dyke** 248-249
**Oil** Alberta 86, 89; Algeria 46, 48; Iran 184; Texas 244
**Oregon** Timber Carnival 178-180
**Pakistan** Indus River 71, 72
**Panama** 272-276
**Panama Canal** 272-273
**Passports** 56-57
**Photosynthesis** 253-257
**Plants** bananas 276; bluestem grass 105; cactus 31; diatoms 255, 256; poppy 204; *Welwitschia mirabilis* 219 *See also* Agriculture; Trees
**Portugal** 109-113 *See also* Angola; Henry, Prince
**Prairies** 104-105
**Prehistoric man** 94-96
**Pygmies** 102-103
**Religions** Buddhism 200-201; Christianity 286-288; Confucianism 307; Druid 324; Eastern Orthodox priest 170; Hinduism 66-67; Islam 186-187; Judaism 342-343; Primitive 320-321; Shintoism 134, 138-139; Taoism 306
**Religious shrines** cathedrals, Addis Ababa 53, Chartres 40, 277, Mérida 214; El Salvador 283; Kaaba 187; Mont St. Michel 42-43; mosques, Iran 181, 182; sacred cave, Yucatán 206-211; temples, Buddhist 25, Hindu 67; *torii*, Japan 138
**Rhode Island** Newport 290-293
**Rivers** 80-81; animal life 190-191; burden bearer 294-295; Clearwater 294; Colorado 336; Columbia 166-168; Congo 10-12; dams 334-336; erosion 222-223; Golden Water 5; Indus 70-72; Jordan 339; Mississippi 295; Mohawk 80; Niagara 6-7; Orinoco 259; pollution 344-345; recreation 354-355; Rio Grande 91; St. Lawrence 174; Snowy 281; Spokane 168; Susquehanna 81; Thames 8; Tuira 276; Yampa 84; Zambezi 335
**Rockets and satellites** NASA 73-77; Saturn 150-151; *Tiros* 22-24
**Rotterdam** 18-19
**Ruhr** 260-261
**Salzkammergut** 106-108
**Santa Fe Trail** 318-319
**Saturn** (rocket) 150-151
**Science** tree hybridizing 59 *See also* Algae; Geology; Gravity; Mohole project; Photosynthesis; Rockets and satellites; Weather
**Shintoism** 134, 138-139
**Singapore** 229-233
**South Carolina** Fort Sumter 298-300
**Space travel** *See* Rockets and satellites
**Spitsbergen** 161-163
**Sports** America's Cup Race 289, 292; calisthenics 3; horse racing 280; ice-boating 197; ice-canoeing 174; logrolling 180; skiing 32, 47, 97; surf riding 280; tennis 137, 280, 292; water 354-355
**Stars** 234-235
**Statues** "Christ of the Andes" 286; Civil War 142; Greek 169; Rotterdam symbol 18
**Stonehenge** 322-324
**Swans** 8-9
**Sweden** 349-353
**Taoism** 306
**Tasmania** 176-177
**Texas** 241-245
***Tiros I*** (satellite) 22-24
**Tomatoes** 308-309
**Tornadoes** 346-347
**Trade** Chicago 227-228; economic union, Europe 14-17; English Channel 152
**Transportation** bicycles 18; buses, Ghana 130-131; covered wagons 318; EUROP 14-15; pedicabs 2; trains 220, 228, 259, 314 *See also* Boats and ships; Highways
**Trees** date palm 99; rubber 271; tree farming 58-60 *See also* National Forests
***Triton*** (submarine) 192
**Union of South Africa** 121-125
**Union of Soviet Socialist Republics** Spitsbergen 162
**United States** Great Lakes 118-119 *See also* Arizona; Boston; California; Chicago; Columbia River; History, American; Kansas; National Forests; National Monuments; National Parks; New Mexico; New York; Newport; Oregon; Prairies; South Carolina; Texas; Washington; Wisconsin
**Venezuela** Cerro Bolívar 258-259
**Victoria Falls** 126-127
**Volcanoes** El Salvador 282, 283
**Wales** Offa's Dyke 248-249
**Washington** (state) Cascades 310-312
**Waterfalls** Niagara 6-7; Victoria Falls 126-127
**Weapons** rifle 262, 263
**Weather** frost 240; *Tiros I* 23-24; tornadoes 346-347; warming world 157-160
**White House** 145-149
**Wisconsin** 193-197
**Zoos** Frankfurt Zoo 13




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